

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7044

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, CI

SUBJECT: ANOTHER PLOY TO REMOVE CHILEAN DEMOCRATIC LABOR LEADERS

1. AN ATTEMPT AFOOT TO REMOVE ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE GROUP OF DEMOCRATIC LABOR LEADERS CALLED THE "DINAMICOS". THIS TIME THE VETERAN PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL RAILWAY WORKERS FEDERATION, ERNESTO VOGEL, HAS BECOME THE TARGET. A PETITION CIRCULATING AMONG RAILROAD WORKERS ASKS FOR SUPPORT FOR A NEW PRO-GOVERNMENT LABOR FRONT AND AN "EXHAUSTIVE" INVESTIGATION BY THE GOC INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF INCUMBENT RAILROAD UNION OFFICIALS.

2. MANUEL HERNANDEZ, A WORKER FROM CONCEPCION HERETOFORE BEST KNOWN FOR HIS FAILURE TO WIN A UNION ELECTION IN 1972 EVEN THOUGH HE RAN UNDER THE UNIDAD POPULAR (ALLENDE COALITION) BANNER, IS FRONTING FOR THE PLOY. THE PETITION SAYS LITTLE ABOUT BREAD AND BUTTER WORKER BENEFITS AND IS LONG ON THE JARGON USED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO DESCRIBE THE ROLE OF UNIONS IN THE NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE PRESCRIBED FOR CHILE. ITS ORIGIN SEEMS CLEAR. RELATED IN OUR VIEW, PRESIDENT PINOCHET MET RECENTLY WITH HERNANDEZ AND SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO STRETCH OUT A DISMISSAL OF 2,000 RAILWAY WORKERS. ACCORDING TO THE BELEAGUERED

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HOGEL, HERNANDEZ--WORKING IN CAHOOTS WITH MANAGEMENT--IS CLAIMING THAT SIGNATURES ON THE PETITION WILL ENSURE JOB SECURITY DURING THIS RIF. HERNANDEZ TOLD THE PRESS THAT ALREADY HE HAS SIGNED UP 2,000 OUT OF THE 18,000 RAILROAD WORKERS.

3. COMMENT: WHILE THE CURRENT MOVE AGAINST VOGEL HARDLY

BREAKS NEW GROUND IN THE ANNALS OF CHILEAN UNION HISTORY,
IT DEMONSTRATES THE FLEXIBILITY AND PERSERVERANCE OF
THE GOC IN GETTING AT THE DINAMICOS. OTHER "DINAMICOS"
HAVE SURVIVED GOC EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE PARALLEL UNION
STRUCTURES, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH A MOVE
HAS BEEN COMBINED WITH THE THREAT OF A MAJOR PERSONNEL
REDUCTION HANGING OVER EVERYONE'S HEAD. AND UNLIKE THE
PRO-GOVERNMENT LABOR FRONTS CREATED IN SOME OTHER
FEDERATIONS, WHICH AIM AT EVENTUALLY OVERSHADOWING
EXISTING LEADERSHIP, THIS ONE EXPLICITLY SEEKS TO OUST
THE CURRENT LEADERS.

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Message Attributes

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